

What is claimed is:

1. An intravascular filter, comprising:

an apical head;

a plurality of filter legs each having a proximal section and a distal section, the proximal section of each filter leg being secured to the apical head; and

a bioabsorbable centering element for centering the intravascular filter within a body vessel, the centering element including one or more biodegradable support members configured to exert an outwardly directed force on the wall of the body vessel when deployed therein.

2. The intravascular filter of claim 1, wherein the bioabsorbable centering element is configured to automatically expand from a collapsed position to an expanded position when deployed in the vessel.

3. The intravascular filter of claim 1, wherein the bioabsorbable centering element is configured to degrade in vivo in about 20 to 30 days.

4. The intravascular filter of claim 1, wherein the bioabsorbable centering element is configured to degrade in vivo in about 3 to 5 days.

5. The intravascular filter of claim 1, further comprising a biodegradable cap coupled to the apical head.

6. The intravascular filter of claim 5, wherein the biodegradable support members extend outwardly from the biodegradable cap.

7. The intravascular filter of claim 1, wherein the biodegradable support members are coupled to the distal sections of said plurality of filter legs.

8. The intravascular filter of claim 1, wherein the biodegradable support members are generally oriented in a direction towards the base of the filter.

9. The intravascular filter of claim 1, wherein the biodegradable support members are generally oriented in a direction away from the base of the filter.

10. The intravascular filter of claim 1, wherein each biodegradable support member has an elongated shape with a substantially circular cross-section.

11. The intravascular filter of claim 10, wherein each biodegradable support member has a bowed or arcuate shape along its length.

12. The intravascular filter of claim 1, wherein the biodegradable support members include a biodegradable material selected from the group consisting of polylactic acid, polyglycolic acid, copolymer poly(lactide-co-glycolide), polydioxanone, polyanhydrides, trimethylene carbondate, poly(hydroxybutyrate), poly(g-ethyl glutamate), poly(ortho esters), polycyanoacrylate, polyphosphazenes, poly(a-hydroxy

acids), poly(e-caprolactone), polysaccharides, modified proteins, albumin, collagen, gelatin, alginate, and starch.

13. An intravascular filter, comprising:

an apical head;

a plurality of filter legs each having a proximal section and a distal section, the proximal section of each filter leg being secured to the apical head; and

a bioabsorbable centering element for centering the intravascular filter within a body vessel, the bioabsorbable centering element including one or more biodegradable support members each having a first end secured to the filter leg, and a second end configured to self-expand and exert an outwardly directed force on the wall of the body vessel when deployed therein.

14. The intravascular filter of claim 13, wherein the bioabsorbable centering element is configured to automatically expand from a collapsed position to an expanded position when deployed in the body.

15. The intravascular filter of claim 13, wherein the bioabsorbable centering element is configured to degrade in vivo in about 20 to 30 days.

16. The intravascular filter of claim 13, wherein the bioabsorbable centering element is configured to degrade in vivo in about 3 to 5 days.

17. The intravascular filter of claim 13, further comprising a biodegradable cap coupled to the apical head.

18. The intravascular filter of claim 13, wherein the biodegradable support members extend outwardly from the biodegradable cap.

19. The intravascular filter of claim 13, wherein the biodegradable support members are coupled to the distal sections of said plurality of filter legs.

20. The intravascular filter of claim 13, wherein the biodegradable support members are generally oriented in a direction towards the base of the filter.

21. The intravascular filter of claim 13, wherein the biodegradable support members are generally oriented in a direction away from the base of the filter.

22. The intravascular filter of claim 13, wherein each biodegradable support member has an elongated shape with a substantially circular cross-section.

23. The intravascular filter of claim 22, wherein each biodegradable support member has a bowed or arcuate shape along its length.

24. The intravascular filter of claim 13, wherein the bioabsorbable support members include a biodegradable material selected from the group consisting of

polylactic acid, polyglycolic acid, copolymer poly(lactide-co-glycolide), polydioxanone, polyanhydrides, trimethylene carbonate, poly(hydroxybutyrate), poly(g-ethyl glutamate), poly(ortho esters), polycyanoacrylate, polyphosphazenes, poly(α -hydroxy acids), poly(ϵ -caprolactone), polysaccharides, modified proteins, albumin, collagen, gelatin, alginate, and starch.

25. An intravascular filter, comprising:

an apical head;

a plurality of filter legs each having a proximal section and a distal section, the proximal section of each filter leg being secured to the apical head; and

a bioabsorbable centering element for centering the intravascular filter within a body vessel, the bioabsorbable centering element including one or more biodegradable support members each having a first end secured to a biodegradable cap disposed about the apical head, and a second end configured to self-expand and exert an outwardly directed force on the wall of the body vessel when deployed therein.

26. A bioabsorbable centering element for use in centering an intravascular device within a body vessel, the bioabsorbable centering element comprising:

at least one support member configured to self-expand and exert an outwardly directed force on the wall of the body vessel when deployed therein, each support member including a biodegradable material configured to degrade in vivo within a predetermined period of time.

27. The bioabsorbable centering element of claim 26, wherein said predetermined period of time is about 20 to 30 days.

28. The bioabsorbable centering element of claim 26, wherein said predetermined period of time is about 3 to 30 days.

29. The bioabsorbable centering element of claim 26, wherein each support member has an elongated shape with a substantially circular cross-section.

30. The bioabsorbable centering element of claim 29, wherein each biodegradable support member has a bowed or arcuate shape along its length.

31. The blood clot filter of claim 26, wherein the biodegradable support members include a biodegradable material selected from the group consisting of polylactic acid, polyglycolic acid, copolymer poly(lactide-co-glycolide), polydioxanone, polyanhydrides, trimethylene carbondate, poly(hydroxybutyrate), poly(g-ethyl glutamate), poly(ortho esters), polycyanoacrylate, polyphosphazenes, poly(α -hydroxy acids), poly(ϵ -caprolactone), polysaccharides, modified proteins, albumin, collagen, gelatin, alginate, and starch.

32. The bioabsorbable centering element of claim 26, further comprising a biodegradable cap.